

### Vocalizations of the Somali Wheatear *Oenanthe phillipsi*

According to Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1960 & 1980) no vocalizations have yet been reported for the Somali Wheatear *Oenanthe phillipsi*. On 11 January 1984 while observing this species in *Acacia-Commiphora* bush near Beled Weyne, Somalia, two different sounds were heard.

The first call was a low, drawn-out whistle of one note. This sound was uttered repeatedly by one bird while in a bush accompanied another of the same species, which was silent throughout. The second call was a buzzing sound, noted as *buzzzz buzz*, made by a single bird which repeatedly flicked its wings while calling. The second bird was not seen at this time. Hollom *et al* (1988) report single note calls, or alarm-calls, for a number of *Oenanthe* species, with the "soft whistle" of *O. deserti* possibly being the closest to the first call heard for *O. phillipsi*.

But as far as I know, no *Oenanthe* species has been reported to make a buzzing sound accompanied by wing-flicking.

### References

- HOLLOM, P.A.D., PORTER, R.F., CHRISTENSEN, S. & WILLIS, I. 1988. *Birds of Middle East and North Africa*. Calton: T. & A.D. Poyser.
- MACKWORTH-PRAED, C.W. & GRANT, C.H.B. 1960. *African handbook of birds. Series I, vol 2. Birds of eastern and north eastern Africa*. London: Longmans Green & Co.

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### Golden Weaver *Ploceus subaureus*—new for Somalia

The Golden Weaver *Ploceus subaureus* has been recorded from Kenya and Tanzania, but has not previously been reported from Somalia. On 6 November 1987, a weaver was observed by CS in the Balcad Nature Reserve, which is situated some 30 km north of Mogadishu at 2°20'N, 45°23'E. The bird was giving finishing touches to a fresh green nest and at the same time starting the construction of a new one right next to it. The nesting site was located on the south bank of the Shabeelle river, with the structure suspended from a branch of a bush overhanging the water. The nest was pear-shaped and woven from grass blades, with the opening at the bottom without an entrance tube. Field identification was difficult, but the pale red eye could be clearly seen. The bird also exhibited a strong black bill, pink feet, and diffuse chestnut patches on forehead, throat and chest; the underparts were yellow with some white in the centre of the belly. The crown appeared to be olive-green with the sides of the face yellowish, which distinguished it from the Golden Palm Weaver *Ploceus bojeri* with its characteristic orange head and throat, and dark brown eyes. Thus the bird was tentatively identified as *Ploceus subaureus*, and several colour slides taken.

Subsequent comparison by JM of the photographs with skins in the collection of the National Museum, Nairobi, confirmed that the weaver in question was *Ploceus subaureus* not *P. bojeri*, the only golden weaver that had previously been found in Somalia. The slides were compared with the skins of an adult male *P. bojeri* from Mogadishu, Somalia, and that of a male of *P. subaureus*, in full breeding plumage, from Kilifi, 65 km north of Mombasa, Kenya, as well as with those of other golden weaver species from eastern Africa. The pale red-brown iris, together with the chestnut forehead, throat and chest were seen to be